United Nations A/60/325

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 September 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Item 73 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Human rights questions: implementation of human rights instruments

Human rights and mass exoduses

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In his reform report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", the Secretary-General identified the nexus between human rights, security and development. This interconnection is especially clear in the context of mass exoduses, where human rights problems often precede deteriorating security situations, which in turn lead to the mass displacement of persons who become refugees or remain internally displaced, at particular risk of further human rights violations. After a situation of mass exodus comes to an end, the challenge is to create security and development conditions conducive to return and durable reintegration. The Secretary-General proposed a number of reforms which, in particular, would enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond promptly and comprehensively to situations of mass exodus, whether arising from armed conflict or from massive natural disasters like the tsunamis of 4 December 2004.

Monitoring is necessary in order to devise appropriate protection strategies. This takes place both at the national level through various actors, including national human rights institutions, and internationally through the Commission on Human Rights, its special procedures and the human rights treaty bodies. These bodies have developed expertise in detecting patterns of human rights violations, especially racial and ethnic discrimination, that are common precursors to situations of pervasive violence and, in the worst case, genocide, and thus serve as an early warning mechanism to help prevent mass exodus.

* A/60/150.

05-47867 (E) 200905

Internally displaced persons form some two thirds of the victims of mass exoduses. Specific steps have been taken to address the situation of these persons. Following the adoption of Commission resolution 2004/55, a Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons was appointed, which has brought a renewed focus to the human rights of these persons.

An Internal Displacement Division was established within the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. With these actions, the United Nations system is endeavouring to respond in a more integrated manner to situations of internal displacement with clearer responsibilities and accountabilities of the various bodies that will complement the work being done by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

This report is submitted in accordance with Assembly resolution 58/169.

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	The scope of the current challenge: the Secretary-General's reform proposals	3–16	3
III.	Monitoring the human rights of persons in mass exodus	17–27	6
IV.	Human rights and mass exoduses: early warning mechanisms	28–30	9
V.	Human rights of internally displaced persons	31–41	10
VI.	Mass exoduses caused by natural disasters	42–49	13
VII.	Conclusions	50–51	15